

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05
OES-07 OMB-01 SS-15 HEW-04 DODE-00 L-03 AGRE-00
IGA-02 /088 W

-----112393 281608Z /43

R 281425Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9214
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 9302

FOR EUR/SOV

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, AF, US, UR
SUBJECT: OPIUM CULTIVATION IN AFGHANISTAN

REFS: (A) KABUL 4009, (B) KABUL 4171, (C) STATE 111535

1. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE BEST WAY TO OBTAIN SOVIET PRESSURE ON THE AFGHANS REGARDING OPIUM CULTIVATION WOULD BE IN A MULTILATERAL CONTEXT, AND THAT RAISING THE ISSUE BILATERALLY HERE COULD WELL BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

2. IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT THE ONLY LEVERAGE THE EMBASSY WOULD HAVE IS IF THE SOVIETS PERCEIVED A DOMESTIC OPIUM OR HEROIN
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PROBLEM. THEY INSIST THEY HAVE NO SUCH PROBLEM.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS MIGHT WELL CHOOSE TO TURN A BILATERAL U.S. DEMARCHE INTO ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF "U.S. INTER-FERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS." THEY MAY ALSO DISTORT IT INTO AN ANTI-CHINESE ISSUE BY NOTING THAT ETHNIC CHINESE HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN ILLICIT OPIUM CULTIVATION THROUGHOUT ASIA AND IN ITS

DISTRIBUTION TO THE WEST. (THE PRC CHARGE IN MOSCOW HAS NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS USE WORLD DRUG TRAFFICKING TO SMEAR THE PRC.)

4. FINALLY THE SOVIETS MAY PUT THE EMBASSY IN AN EMBARRASSING POSITION BY INQUIRING AS TO THEIR STILL OPEN INVITATION FOR A BILATERAL DISCUSSION ON DRUG TRAFFIC INTERDICTION; A MEETING IN MOSCOW WAS POSTPONED INDEFINITELY BY THE U.S. LAST DECEMBER.

5. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THE BEST WAY TO OBTAIN SOME SOVIET PRESSURE ON THE AFGHANS WOULD BE IN A MULTILATERAL CONTEXT POSSIBLY AT UN GENEVA. THE U.S. COULD RAISE AS A GLOBAL ISSUE THE PROBLEM OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BEING TURNED TO NEFARIOUS ENDS, CITING AS ONE EXAMPLE OPIUM CULTIVATION IN NANGARHAR PROVINCE MADE POSSIBLE BY SOVIET IRRIGATION ASSISTANCE. IN THIS FORUM THE SOVIETS ARE BOUND TO BE EMBARRASSED BY THE DISCLOSURE AND WOULD FIND DIFFICULTY IN SHUNTING IT ASIDE AS AN ANTI-CHINESE OR INTERVENTION ISSUE. MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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